

IN THE CLAIMS:

It has been proposed herein that claims 23 through 26, 29 and 31 be amended as hereinafter set forth. Please enter these claims as amended. Upon entry of the amendments, this listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1 through 22 (Previously Cancelled)

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Claim 23 (Four Times Amended): An operable gate stack on a silicon substrate having a dielectric layer thereover, said dielectric layer being substantially devoid of pitting, said operable gate stack including a non-crystalline metallic silicide film and a dielectric cap comprising silicon nitride on said non-crystalline metallic silicide film.

Claim 24 (Five Times Amended): An operable gate stack on a silicon substrate having a dielectric layer thereover, said dielectric layer being substantially devoid of pitting, said operable gate stack including an amorphous metallic silicide film, wherein said amorphous metallic silicide film is substantially devoid of silicon clusters, and a dielectric cap comprising silicon nitride on said amorphous metallic silicide film.

Claim 25 (Six Times Amended): An operable gate stack on a silicon substrate having a dielectric layer thereover, said dielectric layer being substantially devoid of pitting, said operable gate stack comprising:

a polysilicon layer disposed over said dielectric layer;
a non-crystalline metallic silicide film disposed over said polysilicon layer; and
a dielectric cap comprising silicon nitride on said non-crystalline metallic silicide film.

Claim 26 (Five Times Amended): A gate stack structure comprising an operable gate stack on a dielectric layer, over a silicon substrate, wherein said dielectric layer is substantially devoid of pitting, said operable gate stack comprising a metallic silicide film and a dielectric cap comprising silicon nitride on said metallic silicide film.

Claim 27 (Previously Four Times Amended): The gate stack structure of claim 26, wherein said metallic silicide film comprises a non-crystalline metallic silicide film.

Claim 28 (Previously Thrice Amended): The gate stack structure of claim 26, wherein said metallic silicide film comprises an amorphous metallic silicide film substantially devoid of silicon clusters.

11 Claim 29 (Twice Amended): A semiconductor device, comprising at least one gate stack formed on a silicon substrate having a dielectric layer thereover, said dielectric layer being substantially devoid of pitting, said at least one gate stack comprising a non-crystalline metallic silicide film and a dielectric cap comprising silicon nitride on said non-crystalline metallic silicide film.

Claim 30 (Previously Amended): The semiconductor device of claim 29, wherein said at least one gate stack further comprises a polysilicon layer disposed over said dielectric layer, said non-crystalline metallic silicide film being disposed over said polysilicon layer.

Claim 31 (Twice Amended): A semiconductor device, comprising at least one gate stack structure on a dielectric layer, over a silicon substrate, wherein said dielectric layer is substantially devoid of pitting, said at least one gate stack structure comprising a metallic silicide film and a dielectric cap comprising silicon nitride on said metallic silicide film.

Claim 32 (Previously Amended): The semiconductor device of claim 31, wherein said metallic silicide film comprises a non-crystalline metallic silicide film.

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Claim 33 (Previously Amended): The semiconductor device of claim 31, wherein said metallic silicide film comprises an amorphous metallic silicide film substantially devoid of silicon clusters.
